

The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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The Angel Said, "Merry Christmas, Everybody!"

By Evangelist John R. Rice

"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."—Luke 2:8-11.

Perhaps a thousand million greeting cards, or more, all of them saying some variation of the traditional glad greeting, "Merry Christmas," will be mailed in the United States the three weeks preceding Christmas! And however the greeting may vary, saying "Best Wishes" or "Joyous Noel," it is always a wish and an exhortation to happiness, to joy, to merrymaking!

When the angel of the Lord came upon the shepherds in the field, "And the glory of the Lord shone round about them," the angel gave them the most joyful news that human ears ever heard. He said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." The angel really said in other words, "Merry Christmas, everybody!" It was "Good tidings of

great joy." It was the gladdest news that messenger ever brought, that a Saviour was born.

And of course I know that the birth of Jesus Christ does not pay for man's sin. It took the death of Christ to do that. But the birth of Christ foretold and guaranteed His death. He came into the world to die. God had remembered us and visited His people! The promises and prophecies of all the prophets are now to be fulfilled! Oh, God has given a Saviour, Christ the Lord! So it was time

to rejoice, and Christmas now is a time to rejoice.

A traditional Christmas carol says:

"God rest you merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day."

Every Christian has a right to be merry, and only those who will not receive the glad tidings have a right to be glum and sad, when we hear the angel's good news.

John the Baptist was promised to aged Zacharias and Elisabeth in response to some thirty years of prayer, and the announcing angel said, "And thou shalt have

joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth" (Luke 1:14). When John the Baptist was born, it was a sweet reminder. If the forerunner were here, the Saviour Himself would follow in a few short months! And all who knew the meaning of the birth of John the Baptist had joy and gladness and rejoiced at his birth.

When Mary, after the miraculous conception of the Lord Jesus, came to see Elisabeth, Elisabeth rejoiced with a loud voice and praised God. "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour" (Luke 1:46, 47). And aged Zacharias filled with the Holy Ghost made great rejoicing, that his baby John was come and he said to him, "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1:76-79).

And none of those who knew the meaning of the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ could refrain from rejoicing. Think of old Simeon, who had begged that he might live to see the Saviour that God had promised, as he came by

the Spirit into the Temple and took up the baby Jesus in his arms, "and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel" (Luke 2:28-32). And there was the blessed widow, Anna the prophetess, who came into the Temple and gave thanks to God. It was "Merry Christmas" to Anna, too.

I do not wonder that the shepherds, when they heard the message and then hurried to the manger in Bethlehem to see the baby Jesus, "... returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." It was "good tidings of great joy" to the shepherds.

A little afterward a caravan wended its long way from the East, up over the Fertile Crescent north of the Arabian desert, and down to the Jordan and across and up to Jerusalem. There three wise men from the East asked, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (Matt. 2:2). Herod was troubled, but the chief priests and scribes reminded them of the promise in Micah 5:2, that Christ should be born in Bethlehem.

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"HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL"

By Dr. Joe Henry Hankins
2724 Broadway, Little Rock, Arkansas

(SERMON PREACHED AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS, SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 22, 1940. STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED.)

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."—Isa. 9:6.

From this text I call attention to this statement: "His name shall be called Wonderful." I have thought that sometime I would go through the Bible and select out of it the names by which the Bible calls Christ and preach a series of sermons on those names. You would be astounded at the number of different names that are used in the Bible. It simply means that Christ is so wonderful in all of His manifoldness, in all of the beauty and meaning of His work, His person and relationship to human life, that God has all but exhausted human language in an effort to find terms in which to express, in the names that are given unto Him in the Word of God, this meaning.

He is called the Redeemer. He is called the Saviour. He is spoken of as the Light of the world—"that true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." He is called "The Sun of righteousness" that shall "arise with healing in his wings." He is the "Day Star," the "Bright and Morning Star." He is the "Rose of Sharon"—the "Lily of the Valley," the "One altogether lovely," "the fairest among ten thousand," the "Balm of Gilead," the "Great Physician." "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor . . . Prince of Peace." He is the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Again He is called, "The fulness of the Godhead bodily." He is "The Word." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word

was with God, and the Word was God . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." He is the "Good Shepherd." He is the Christ, the Anointed of God . . . the Messiah, promised to the Jews. He is "Our Passover that was slain." He is the "King of kings and the Lord of lords."

On and on you could go recounting the names by which He is called in the Scripture. He is the "Seed of the woman" that

should bruise the serpent's head. Oh, the matchless Christ—the wonderful Christ, the Saviour of the world! "Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." No wonder Heaven bent low that night, and the multitude of the heavenly host sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." "His name shall be called Wonderful." How I thank God this morning for Jesus Christ! Truly He is wonderful.

I. He Was Wonderful in His Birth

It was no ordinary birth. His birth had been prophesied from the time God came down in the Garden of Eden that day—that awful day when sin had entered into the world and Adam and Eve were trying to hide themselves among the trees of the garden in an effort to hide their nakedness from God. In their hopelessness and despair God came walking in the cool of the day calling, "Adam, where art thou?" Then, when they must reveal their sin and God must pronounce the curse that comes by sin, God holds out a promise of a Redeemer, saying, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." In that prophecy is the promise of the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

Four thousand years before that event took place God said that He was to be born of a virgin. Then, after centuries came and went, the prophets took up the prophecy and again and again pointed to that holy hour, naming the time and the place. For when wicked King Herod would find out where the King should be born, he called the teachers of

(Continued on page 4)

The Song of the Lord Began

By F. B. Meyer

"And Hezekiah commanded to offer the burnt offering upon the altar. And when the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets, and with the instruments ordained by David king of Israel."—II Chron. 29:27.

Abounding joy is the prime characteristic of our holy religion—joy unspeakable and full of glory. This is as natural to true religion as the bloom on a maiden's face is to perfect health. You can't create joy, but you can make the conditions from which it springs.

If your life is joyless, it must be because of some sin. Find out, then, the reason why your harp hangs on the willow, and joy has died out of your life. Our Lord said: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11). If your joy is not full, you have not entered into the heart of our Lord's sermon about the vine and the branches.

Paul said: "The fruit of the Spirit is . . . joy" (Gal. 5:22). Now, fruit is natural. There is no effort about fruit. Indeed, the effort of the bough is to repress the fruit which presses forward into expression, so that gardeners have to prune away excessive production. If the bough is properly connected to the trunk, it bears fruit; and if you are properly related to our Lord, joy will be as natural to you as singing to a bird.

Is your religion somber and dour? Is there no spring and elasticity about it? Do children find you out or shun you? When you enter society, does the laughter and merriment die? Are you an element of perfect gladness at a party? If not, there is something wrong in your inner life which is choking the spring of joy.

Some years ago my friend, Dr. Handley Moule, visited the excavations in the Forum at Rome. While there, as the rubbish was being cleared away, suddenly there gushed forth the waters of a spring that had been choked for centuries. Poor little spring! Longing to express itself and flash in the sunlight, but choked by the accumulations of the years!

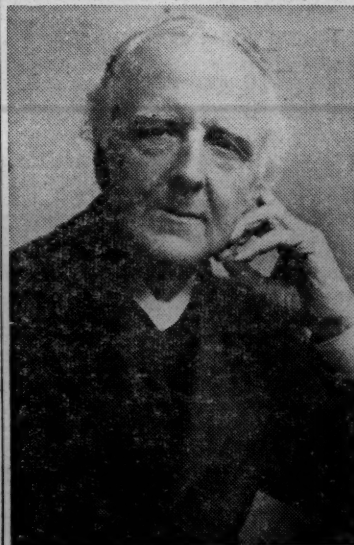
So, if you are a Christian at all, there is a spring of joy in your soul which has been stopped and silenced. My first mission is to put my hand on what is wrong.

In order to help me lay hold

(Continued on page 5)



Dr. Joe Henry Hankins



Rev. F. B. Meyer

Start The New Year Right

-- by Blessing Others Through the Sword

You may still send THE SWORD OF THE LORD as a Christmas present. But because of our heavy mail, it will be necessary for YOU to send a card to them announcing the gift. Simply say, "I am sending THE SWORD OF THE LORD to you in 1959 as a Christmas present with my best wishes and Christian love," or something of the kind. Then we will get the subscription started just as quickly as possible.

What could you send that would be as nice a Christmas present as THE SWORD OF THE LORD? Your greeting card, on which you tell them it comes every week in the year as a gift of love and prayer, will make it very valuable and greatly treasured, we believe.

Five Big Reasons for Sending Subscriptions Now

1. Gifts to THE SWORD OF THE LORD are deductible from taxable income.

The federal government now allows one to deduct up to thirty per cent of his income which is given to religious or nonprofit institutions. Why not pay for as many subscriptions as possible for Jesus' sake, before January 1? Wouldn't you rather use that money for the Lord than for taxes? Some earnest Christians who read this could send \$200 to pay for around one-hundred subscriptions. Others might be able to send \$38 to pay for twenty subscriptions. Some could send only \$5 or \$10. But all such gifts may properly be deducted from taxable income. If you send money to be applied to our Minister and Missionary Fund, we will send a receipt. (We do not send a receipt when you subscribe for particular persons by name. In that case, keep your own records.)

2. Why not give a Christmas present to Jesus Christ?

We have recently been asking you to send subscriptions to others as Christmas presents to those you love. Why not send a Christmas present to Jesus Himself? Why not send subscriptions to people who need THE SWORD simply for the reason that you love the Lord Jesus and believe it will honor Him and will win souls and help people to glorify God? After all, Christmas should be celebrated as Jesus' birthday. It would be proper to give unselfishly a loving gift to honor Him alone. Actually, those who receive THE SWORD will get great blessings from it; but why not make a gift just because you love Jesus Christ? Send us names and addresses with money, or send a gift to apply to the Sword Minister and Missionary Subscription Fund and we will see that THE SWORD goes to those who need the paper and are hungry in heart. Thousands of retired preachers,

ministerial students, Christian workers in other lands want the paper and it would have life-changing power in their lives. Why not send them THE SWORD just for Jesus' sake as a love-gift to Him?

3. SWORD OF THE LORD subscriptions are still the best and cheapest way to do permanent good to thousands.

In what way can you get in fifty-two visits a year with Bible preaching, answers to Bible questions, stirring hearts for soul winning, reporting great revivals? Love for Jesus Christ, as we said above, is a good reason for sending subscriptions. Love for your fellowmen is also a good reason. We believe that to give subscriptions to THE SWORD OF THE LORD is one of the very best possible uses of the Lord's money. Certainly it is right to use tithes and offerings for this purpose, just as it is right to use them in getting out the Gospel, under the leading of the Holy Spirit. It is as logical, sensible, and spiritual to pay to have THE SWORD OF THE LORD go into homes as to pay a preacher to stand in the pulpit and preach.

4. Here is a wonderful way to use a Christmas bonus or money received as Christmas gifts.

Many of you readers perhaps will get a Christmas bonus from your employers. Why not use at least a part of that in getting out the Gospel by sending subscriptions to THE SWORD OF THE LORD? Every year some dear saints of God who have little money write to tell how happy they were when at Christmas a son or daughter or other loved ones sent a gift of money for Christmas and so they were able to send subscriptions for others, as they had wished to do before.

You who have extra income at Christmastime—why not send a part of it as subscriptions to THE SWORD OF THE LORD and thus honor Christ? A thank-offering is in order for extra income. Won't you either make up your own list of subscriptions and send them now, or send a gift to our Minister and Missionary Subscription Fund?

5. THE SWORD now at a special rate, plus the new just-off-the-press book yours free!

A subscription to THE SWORD OF THE LORD offers 52 weeks of special blessing and enjoyment that can't be measured by its low price. Yet the cost is surprisingly low—especially at these special Christmas-New Year rates:

... only \$3 for one subscription and the big book of 202 pages, \$2.50 value, *Is God a "Dirty Bully"?* free—\$5.50 worth for only \$3;
... or renew your own sub-

WITH THE Evangelists

REPORTS FROM AMERICA'S OUTSTANDING SOUL WINNERS

EVANGELIST BILLY G. KELLOUGH, 808 West Florida Street, Evansville, Indiana, is now in full-time revival work, having resigned the pastorate of the South Vermont Avenue Baptist Church at Gardena, California. Brother Kellough has had six years in the pastorate, with radio and tent evangelism experience. He and Mrs. Kellough sing duets, and Evangelist Kellough plays the piano and trombone. Brother Kellough is associated with the Regu-



lar Baptist churches, is a long-time friend of THE SWORD OF THE LORD, takes a clear, firm stand on the essentials of the Christian faith.

Pastor Frank Emitte of the First Baptist Church, Woodville, California, writes a fine report of an eight-day revival campaign conducted by Evangelist Kellough. He reports crowds with standing room only, Spirit-filled and biblical messages, souls saved, Christians revived, and blessed after effects of the revival.

Pastor Ray Overstreet, of Pioneer Baptist Church in Norwalk, California, and Pastor Homer Reagan of the Temple Baptist Church, South Gate, California, highly recommend Evangelist Kellough.

We are glad God is raising up sound, anointed men for evangelistic work. Remember the address, Evangelist Billy G. Kellough, 808 West Florida Street, Evansville, Indiana.

scription for three years for \$7 and get the free book—a saving of \$4.50. (Or send three separate one-year subscriptions for \$7);

... or, better yet, send ten Christmas subscriptions for \$19 and receive free book—a saving of \$13.50.

(Canada or foreign, add 50c for each yearly subscription)

If you wish, you may make a gift outright to our Minister and Missionary Fund. A free book will be sent for a gift of \$3 or more. Won't you do the best you can by January 12, when this special offer closes?

The 202-page book, \$2.50, *Is God a "Dirty Bully"?* and *Other Sensational Sermons* will be sent to you FREE with any one of the above plans, in appreciation for any number of subscriptions. Typically evangelistic, typically John R. Rice—sermons which have greatly influenced big audiences and readers on subjects that are of vital interest to everybody. For both saved and unsaved. A volume you will want to own. We believe God will bless it mightily and that it will be the talk among Christian workers far and near.

At the present, THE SWORD is being mailed to all 48 states, to 6 of the United States possessions, to 90 foreign countries, and to the 12 provinces in Canada. Only God's mercy has so prospered this good work. If you are for the holy crusade THE SWORD OF THE LORD puts on for revival, soul winning, and defense of the faith, will you not show it by sending subscriptions to us, at least by January 12, when this special offer closes?

Address all mail to THE SWORD OF THE LORD, Box 420, Wheaton, Illinois.

God bless you, and Merry Christmas!

Handy coupon in this issue.

Please mention THE SWORD OF THE LORD when answering advertisements.

A Satisfied Subscriber Says—

"Is God a 'Dirty Bully'? Should Be in Every Home All Over the World"

Our very first comment has just come on the new book offered with subscriptions—*Is God a "Dirty Bully"?* And we are delighted to have these words:

"I received my order, *Is God a Dirty Bully?*" I must say that is a book that should be in every home all over the world. I enclose \$5. Please send it to my niece, ----- If I had the money, I would place such a book in many homes. Oh, if that book had come my parents way some ninety years ago, or my way sixty years ago, and if we had taken heed, it would have saved years of crime, shame, disgrace, heartbreak."

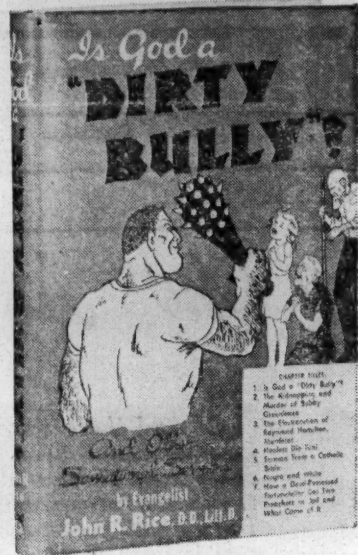
Then this reader goes on to tell of his life of crime, asking personal advice of the editor.

Yes, we expect thousands of such blessings from this book, which you may have free until January 12 with a 1-year subscription to THE SWORD OF THE LORD for \$3; with three 1-year subscriptions for \$7; with ten 1-year subscriptions for \$19. (Add 50c per subscription per year for Canadian or foreign subscriptions). This book of 202 pages, \$2.50 value, simulated cloth binding, is absolutely free with any one of the above offers UNTIL JANUARY 12 when we must bring this present campaign to a close.

Chapter titles are: 1. Is God a "Dirty Bully"? 2. The Kidnapping and Murder of Bobby Greenlease. 3. The Electrocution of Raymond Hamilton, Murderer. 4. Healers Die, Too! 5. A Sermon From a Catholic Bible. 6. Negro and White. 7. How a Devil-Possessed Fortune-teller Got Two Preachers in Jail and What Came of It.

God greatly blessed these messages as preached in city-wide campaigns and as they were printed in THE SWORD OF THE LORD. Now we expect tremendous blessings as they are sent out under the title, *Is God a "Dirty Bully"?* and *Other Sensational Sermons*. Use coupon on page 3. The time is short. Rush your order today!

Sword of the Lord, Box 420, Wheaton, Illinois



Will God's Patience Hold Out for You?

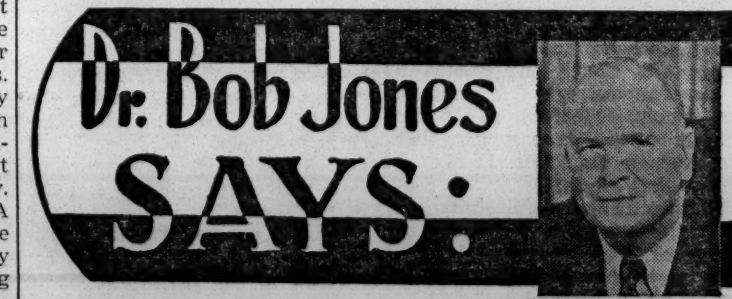
The patience of Job is a story old,
We marvel at this good man.
Yet infinitely greater God's patience is
Toward those who reject His plan.
He yearns and He pleads and He waits to save
The many—not just the few—
But some day His patience will have expired—
Say—will it hold out for you?

God's mercy and love are wonderful,
So tender that heart divine.
'Tis not in His plan that a single soul
In Hell should be left to pine.
This human family He yearns to save;
He's calling, my friend, to you.
But we know that some day He will call no more—
Will His patience hold out for you?

God's Spirit, He says, will not always strive
On earth in the hearts of men.
How grateful, my friend, you should be today
That you still hear His pleadings then.
Some day, oh how sad, you will know no more
That patience and love so true.
O sinner, today make your peace with Him,
While His patience holds out for you!

Edythe Johnson

(Written March 22, 1944, after hearing Dr. Rice speak on "When God's Patience Runs Out.")



I quote from a letter received recently from a Bob Jones University graduate who is pastor of a church in a Southern state: "There are more than 800,000 members of the churches of a certain denomination in this state. Last year there were less than 34,000 professions of faith. This is a ratio of about 1 to 25. It took 25 professing Christians to win 1 person to Christ during the whole year. There are more than 500 churches in the state that did not receive any members on profession of faith. There were 2 churches where the ratio of new converts was 1 to 6. The pastors of both of these churches are graduates of Bob Jones University. I have a full-time job during the week and a full-time job as a pastor of a church."

There is scarcely a day passes that we do not receive some wonderful letter of testimony from

some former student of Bob Jones University, and sometimes many such letters come in a day. Our Bob Jones University students are scattered almost all over the world, and God is using the overwhelming majority of them to win the lost to the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, you people who pray for my son, the president, and for me and for the University and you who have invested some of the Lord's money in the work of the institution and you who have recommended to the University young people who have possibilities of leadership have had a part in all the wonderful things that God is doing. Won't you let us hear from you? Thank you, and God bless you.

BOB JONES, FOUNDER
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By Aunt Joy

Jonathan's Gift

The stars twinkled brightly above the Judean hills as Jonathan and the other shepherds watched over the sheep. In the distance they could see the village of Bethlehem, now quiet and sleeping. Early in the day the village had been noisy and crowded as hundreds of travelers, descendants of David, had come to register at Bethlehem in obedience to Caesar Augustus, the Roman emperor. For some strange reason, Caesar had given a decree that all the Jews were to return to the city of their ancestors to register for taxation. Thus it was that the small town of Bethlehem, "the city of David," was filled to overflowing.

Jonathan, almost twelve years old, shivered as a cool wind shook the branches of the olive trees nearby. He threw another knot of wood on the small fire that kept the shepherds warm during the cold nights. Then he glanced

heart I have had a strong feeling that God was in that command of Caesar's. You remember that the Messiah is to be of the house of David. I have wondered if perhaps the time for His coming is to be soon. And the prophet Micah foretold that the One who would rule Israel forever would be born in our little Bethlehem. Jonathan, perhaps Messiah will come soon . . . His voice shook a bit as he said, "Oh, I should love to see the Christ before I die."

Jonathan sat quietly in the darkness, but his heart was filled with a strange excitement at the words of his uncle. Jonathan longed to ask his uncle more, but he saw that his uncle was deep in thought and did not want to be disturbed. So Jonathan held his head in his hands and thought too.

Suddenly a brilliant light shone upon the whole field. The sheep

pet. Other shepherds followed his example, and then the whole group of them left the fields and hurried down the path to the town, trusting God to care for their sheep.

After they entered Bethlehem, they began to look for a stable. The angel had said the baby would be lying in a manger, and where would a manger be found except in a stable. Soon they found the humble stable behind an inn. There was the mother, Mary, and a kind-looking man stood near her. And there—just as the angel had said—was the baby, lying in a manger and wrapped up in swaddling clothes, plain white strips of cloth.

Nathaniel hurried forward with a look of rapture on his face. "I have brought my best little lamb," he said to Mary. "I hope He will like it. It is a perfect lamb and has no sores or scars. I want Messiah to have my very best."

"He will be glad, I know," smiled Mary. "Thank you."

The other shepherds crowded around the rough manger and lovingly laid down their best lambs. They marveled at the tiny little baby, who was the Messiah, and thanked God that He had let them see Christ the Lord.

But Jonathan did not enter the stable. How could he possibly go in and look at that precious baby when he had no gift for Him. He had no little lamb to offer. He was just a boy and had absolutely nothing good enough to give the Lord Jesus. So Jonathan stood outside and looked from a distance. He was so miserable and unhappy.

Then he heard a voice, "Come here, Jonathan." Mary smiled sweetly at him and motioned for him to come near. Jonathan obeyed her and stepped inside. Mary picked up the baby and held Him so Jonathan could see Him better. He looked just like all babies—he had no crown, no beautiful blankets, or royal garments—but He was the promised Messiah, and Jonathan loved Him. Mary asked, "Why didn't you want to come in? Was it because you had no gift?"

"Yes," said Jonathan, trying to keep back the tears. "If I had a lamb, I would gladly give it to Him. But I am only a boy and I have nothing to give Him."

"No, Jonathan, you are wrong. You have a very precious gift—something the Lord Jesus wants more than anything in the world. You can give Him your heart," Mary said.

Jonathan understood it in an instant. Of course, that is what Jesus wanted more than anything. Hadn't the angel said that Christ was the Saviour? He had come to save people, to give them new hearts.

"Dear Lord Jesus, I want you to be my Saviour. I gladly give you my heart," Jonathan whispered.

Later that night the shepherds returned to the field with great joy. On the way back they stopped every person they met and told them, "Christ has come! An angel told us that He had been born, and we went and saw Him with our own eyes. Messiah has come!" And Jonathan, his face lighted up with joy, added, "He is the Saviour. He gives peace and a new heart!"

Are you all ready for Christmas at your house? I imagine the tree is all decorated and soon there will be presents under it for the whole family—mom and dad, sisters and brothers, Aunt Cathy and Uncle Bill. Many of you have saved money so you could buy something for your mom and dad, or you have worked hard to make something nice for them. I wonder . . . what are you going to give to Jesus this Christmas?

More than anything, Jesus wants your heart. He wants you to believe Him and trust Him to be your Saviour. And then after we are saved, He wants us to give our lives to Him. He wants us to love Him and obey Him.

Christmas is the birthday of Jesus. I hope you won't leave Him out.

Coloring Contest Again!

You will enjoy coloring the lovely manger scene our artist, Miss

What's That String Around Your Finger?

Don't forget to make Susie's halo for the Christmas pageant . . . Be sure to pick up the turkey before noon on the 23rd

Get something for Uncle Charlie

Remember to figure out a way to wrap up Junior's bicycle

Find the other string of Christmas tree lights

If you're like the rest of us, you've got plenty of things to remember, these days, and hardly time to stop and think what the string is for.

But I hope you'll remember just one more thing—there'll be more crossword puzzles next year! So

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at the flock of sheep, checking to be sure that all were safe. Just then his gray-bearded uncle, Nathaniel, spoke: "Jonathan, my boy, some day you shall watch your own flock of sheep. You are quick to learn, and careful to watch the sheep even though they are not yours. I am teaching you all I know, and then someday—I am getting old, you know—you will have your own flock to care for."

Jonathan's dark eyes brightened and he smiled at the praise of his old uncle. "I should like that, Uncle."

Most of the other shepherds were dozing now, while Nathaniel and Jonathan watched the sheep. Nathaniel was a good man, as well as kind, and young Jonathan learned much from their nightly talks around the fire.

"Uncle Nathaniel, did you see all the travelers that came into Bethlehem today? I have never seen Bethlehem in such an uproar. Imagine trying to fit all the descendants of David into this small village. Why do you suppose Caesar made such a decree?"

Nathaniel pulled his beard as he thought a moment. "I do not know, nephew. It seems rather strange to me. And yet in my

scurried about in fright and the drowsy shepherds were awakened sharply. Their hearts were filled with fear as they saw an angel of the Lord, and they trembled in the presence of the glory of the Lord. Jonathan's heart pounded and he fell on his face.

The angel said, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." And then suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host, singing the most beautiful song the shepherds had ever heard: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

And as suddenly as the angels had come, they were gone. Nathaniel rose up quickly. "Let us hurry to Bethlehem and see this wonderful thing the Lord has told us about." The shepherds all nodded in agreement. Old Nathaniel picked up his best lamb, Frisky, the one with the perfect body and snow-white wool. If the Saviour had come, he must give Him his

Name Called Wonderful

(Continued from page 1)

the Scripture, and they said, "In Bethlehem of Judea." When old Simeon searched the Scriptures he was conscious that the time was drawing near, for God had set the time of that birth as well as the place and the circumstances under which He should be born. Simeon began to pray that he might live to see with his own eyes the King, and when they laid that babe in his arms he said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace . . . For mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:29, 30).

It was no ordinary birth, but the most wonderful and the most miraculous birth that ever took place from the beginning of the world. For it was the incarnation of the God of the universe in a little babe. It was the result of the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit as He begot, in the womb of the virgin Mary, the great God of creation Himself.

I believe with all my heart in the virgin birth of the Son of God. The modern religionist says that it does not make any difference whether you believe in the virgin birth or not. Friend, it does make all the difference in the world. For if He were begotten by an earthly father and had only a natural birth, then we have no Saviour. We have only a beautiful example in a great man—only a beautiful life and martyrdom in the end, with unrealized hopes and ambitions snuffed out by death. If He were not virgin-born, then His bones are rotting somewhere in the tomb in Palestine today. But, thank God, He was the incarnate God Himself—wonderful in His birth.

The most wonderful story ever told is that story of the appearance of the angel Gabriel to that young woman chosen of God, saying: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God . . . He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."—Luke 1:32, 33, 35.

But I hear a skeptic say, "If

Most of my life I have been an executive. Nearly all my life I have been the head of some organization. My problem has never been to find talented people. The hardest job I ever had has been to find loyal and dependable men and women. It takes years to build a real organization. All executives find as a rule that they have to train from the ground up dependable and loyal members of an organization. The hardest thing an executive has to do is to pay a man to curse him. You can get plenty of cursing free.—Bob Jones, Sr.

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a young woman said today that her son was virgin-born, would you believe it?" Yes, if—

If the birth of that one had been predicted centuries in advance, I would believe it.

If the place of his birth, the manner of his life and death and burial and resurrection had been predicted centuries in advance, I would believe it.

If he lived a perfect life so that even his enemies could find no fault in him, I would believe it.

If he could walk on the waves; still the tempest; heal the leper; raise the dead; open the eyes of the blind; and read the innermost thoughts of the hearts of men, I would believe it.

If in the hour of his death the sun, moon and stars refused to shine; the earth reeled to and fro like a drunken man; and the dead came forth from their graves, I would believe it.

If all the power of the mighty Roman Empire could not keep his body in the tomb; if he could tear away the bars of death, take up his body and show himself alive for forty days after his resurrection. I would believe it.

If unlearned fishermen could preach the message of his resurrection and see three thousand lives instantaneously transformed, I would believe it.

If belief in and trusting the power of that man's sacrificial death on a cross would cause the thief to steal no more; the murderer to hate no more; the drunkard to drink no more; the moral leper to sin no more; then I would believe it.

If there is dense darkness, terrible sin, gross ignorance wherever the name of that man is not known; and if there is light, and peace, and progress, and righteousness where this name is known, I would believe it.

II. He Was Wonderful in His Life

The atheists, skeptics, infidels, agnostics and believers alike are of one accord in saying that His was the most wonderful life. And the words that fell from His lips are words such as no man ever spoke, and a life, the story of which is told in such simple grandeur that all exclaim with one accord,

No mortal can with Him compare
Among the sons of men;
Fairer is He than all the fair
That fill the heavenly train.

His was such a life that not a single time did He ever make a mistake. Not one single time did He utter a word that He had to take back. Never did He have to apologize for anything He said or did. Not even His bitterest enemies, try as they did—and they sought out their shrewdest, and hounded His footsteps day and night trying to trap Him—could find anything of which to accuse Him. But He can challenge them all: "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46). And not a single one is ever, even with their false witnesses, able to convict Him of a single sin. Even the one who betrayed Him comes with that blood money and throws it at the feet of the Sanhedrin and says, "I have betrayed innocent blood." Even the one who sat on the judgment seat and passed sentence on Him said, "I find no fault in him."

III. He Was Wonderful in His Humility

So completely had the Son of God emptied Himself of His divinity that not one single time did He exercise the power that was in His own right, but even His ministry and His miracles were performed by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. So completely had He emptied Himself that Paul said, "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:6-8).

Oh, the humility of the Son of God, who stood on nothing in the beginning and by the word of His power spoke worlds into existence! For God said, "All things

were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (John 1:3). The Son of God who upholds all things by the word of His power had so humbled Himself that He rested on a mother's bosom as a helpless little babe. Then in His manhood, even in His ministry, He has so completely humbled Himself that we hear Him saying to those who follow Him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head" (Matt. 8:20). He who was rich became poor that we through His poverty might be rich. The very clothes that He wore were provided by the hands of a little group of women. The food that He ate must be provided by others. He must sleep on the ground or on another man's bed. He was fed from another man's table. He was buried in another man's tomb and wrapped in another man's shroud. Oh, wonderful, wonderful, that the eternal God should stoop so low to become man's Saviour!

IV. He Was Wonderful in His Compassion

See Him as He goes about touching humanity. See Him and feel the great throb of His compassionate heart as He sees the multitudes as sheep without a shepherd and is moved with compassion for them.

Watch Him as He goes among suffering, sin-cursed humanity. He is never too tired to forget Himself and minister to the suffering multitude and answer every cry of need. He never sends the multitude away hungry, but takes the loaves and fishes and feeds them until they are all filled.

Never does He come upon a sinner who is tired of sin but that we hear Him saying, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." He comes into a sick room, healing the sick. He met a leper, making him whole. He met many a blind man, giving him his sight, a deaf man, making him to hear. He entered a death chamber and He raised the dead to life. He goes out to the cemetery with the sorrowing and with infinite compassion weeps with them and calls forth the dead and gives him back to his loved ones again. Oh, the compassionate Christ!

He never met an adulteress or an adulterer but that He loved them to His own great heart and sent them away clean, if they repented—their sins forgiven. The very crowd that even the religious world had cast out and said, "Master, the law says she should be stoned," had the compassion of His heart. Even in the court of the temple when an adulterous woman has been dragged out before Him, we hear Him saying, "Where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?" She said, "No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more" (John 8:10, 11).

See Him at Jacob's well; as Jesus leans on the well curb, He forgets about His own weariness and His compassionate heart reaches out to a nameless woman of sin. When she realizes who He is, she leaves her empty waterpot to tell the story of divine grace and to bring the whole town to Him of whom she said, "Surely this is the Messiah."

Oh, the compassionate Christ who was not willing that any should perish! "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

V. He Was Wonderful in His Death

His was no ordinary birth, no ordinary life, and no ordinary death. Hear Him as He says, "For this cause came I into the world." The Son of man hath the power to lay down His life and the power to take it up again. That death was prophesied from the Garden of Eden. That death was portrayed in type in Eden when God took an innocent victim, and slew it and spilled its blood and with the skin made a garment to clothe the first sinners. Oh, the Lamb of God that was slain, not only for these in the garden, but the Lamb of God that, from all eternity, had His face set toward Calvary, comes of His own accord to lay down His life! "No man tak-

eth it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (John 10:18).

When they come to arrest Him, He steps out and says, "Whom seek ye?" They say, "Jesus of Nazareth." Then we hear two words fall from His lips with such majesty and power that those soldiers who have come to arrest Him fall backward on the ground paralyzed and helpless in His presence. Those two words were the words spoken to Moses on Sinai when he said to God, "Whom shall I say hath sent me?" God says, "Tell them I AM hath sent you." And when Jesus, the eternal "I AM," even in His humiliation, speaks those words there is such power that the soldiers of Rome fall on their backs in utter helplessness. No soldier could bind His hands. All the armies of the world could not put handcuffs on those wrists. "The Son of man came to GIVE His life" (Matt. 20:28). He has such power in the tip of His finger that when Peter draws the sword and slashes off the ear of the servant of the high priest, He can touch that ear and it is healed. But the Son of God stretched out His hands and they placed the handcuffs on Him and led Him like a "lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."

He is wonderful as He hangs on that old rugged cross. In that hour of death He is wonderful. See Him as He looks down on the raging mob. We hear such words fall from His lips as we never heard before under such conditions. Listen! It is a prayer—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). As He comes to the end He lifts up His majestic head and looks up into the Father's face and there is a shout of victory coming from His soul, the like of which never fell on human ears before. It is not the weak, exhausted cry of a dying martyr. It is the shout of a victor. And as He speaks, this earth upon which the scene is taking place is shaken by a mighty earthquake, and it rocks and reels on its axis. Rocks are rent and tumble into the valley below as we hear those words, "IT IS FINISHED." The "Seed of woman" has come to redeem. The Lamb of God has bled His life away. Sin has been atoned for. The price of redemption has been paid. The capstone of that great edifice of redemption that God has been erecting has been put in place. The foundation was laid back yonder before man was created. The promise was made in the Garden of Eden. The consummation was foreshadowed in every bleeding altar from Abel unto Calvary. It is now finished. That was no ordinary death. It was God Almighty taking upon Himself the sin of a fallen race. The time of that death had been prophesied. Every detail of it had been foretold. It was said that "he was numbered with the transgressors," and that "he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich." "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53:7, 9, 12).

The very day was set fifteen hundred years in advance. That night when the passover lamb was slain in Egypt the date was set upon which the Son of God should die. When the hour approached, the Pharisees said, "Not on the day of the Passover, lest a tumult arise." But God had said fifteen hundred years before that it must be on the Passover—the hour when our Passover should be slain—and on the Passover it was. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

His death and atonement for our sins is the blood that is typified in the Garden of Eden. It is the blood that was typified in Abel's offering, "by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:4). It is the blood that was foreshadowed in the night of the Passover on the lintels and doorposts of the homes in Egypt. It is the blood without the shedding of which "there is no remission" of sin. It is atoning, redeeming blood. And thank God this morning, I believe with all my heart in the atoning efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ. I fasten all

(Continued on page 5)

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Name Called Wonderful

(Continued from page 4)

my hope as a sinner on the blood of Christ, for time and eternity.

My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;

I dare not trust the sweetest frame,

But wholly lean on Jesus' name. On Christ the solid rock I stand; All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand.

"His name shall be called Wonderful." Oh, isn't it wonderful to be a Christian? Isn't it wonderful! Washed in His blood, born of His Spirit, begotten with incorruptible seed, "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"! Living in that hope of the glory of God that one day we shall be like Him!

VI. He Is Wonderful in His Power

In His power to save He is wonderful. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:22). "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 12:28). "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18). "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). It was not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin, but thank God, He appeared in the end of the age to offer Himself once for all—a sacrifice that would take away sin and remove every stain. It is a wonderful Christ that can reach down in the pit of corruption and lift the sinner up from the miry clay, and wash him white in the fountain filled with blood, drawn from Immanuel's veins. He is wonderful in His power to save to the uttermost all that will come to God by Him.

He is wonderful in His power to keep. He is wonderful in His power to "supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." He is wonderful in His power to take human life and make it glorious, wonderful, happy, deep, sweet, and blessed. "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12).

He is wonderful in His power to transform human lives. He is wonderful in His power to change a human life and put a song in the soul, even the praises of God forevermore. And that power that raised Him from the dead will one day call our sleeping bodies from the dust, and we shall awake in His likeness, and we shall leave that place where we have rested for a while and come forth singing and shouting. The theme of our song will be, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:55-57).

One day He is coming in His glory and all the holy angels with Him; and sin shall be destroyed, and he that hath the power of death shall be placed in the bottomless pit and the key turned on him, and the "earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea," when He shall come forth from the Father riding upon the white horse, and on his thigh is written, "King of kings and Lord of lords." "His name shall be called Wonderful." When I think of it my heart wells up in that glorious old song,

All hail the power of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall; Bring forth the royal diadem, And crown Him Lord of all.

Let every kindred, every tribe, On this terrestrial ball, To Him all majesty ascribe, And crown Him Lord of all.

(From the book, OLD-TIME RELIGION, by Joe Henry Hankins. Published by Sword of the Lord. Now out of print.)

The Song of the Lord Began

(Continued from page 1)

of your conscience, turn to II Chronicles 29:27, where we are told:

"When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also."

The word "began" indicates that it had ceased. If you look into the preceding chapter you will find that for sixteen years the song of the Lord had never broken from Levite throats, had never floated through the temple courts. Those courts, intended by David to resound with the praises and worship of God, were still. In this they resembled your heart, for your heart was meant for music. If it has ceased, it is probably from the same reason.

The Cause of the Silence

What had happened during those sixteen years?

Turn to the twenty-eighth chapter, verses 24 and 25. "Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God, and cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, and shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, and he made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. And in every several city of Judah he made high places to burn incense unto other gods, and provoked to anger the Lord God of his fathers."

King Ahaz was weary of the worship of God. So he put out the lights, he closed the doors, he took away the keys, he turned the Levites adrift. The sparrows made their homes, the birds of the air built their nests in the neglected courts of the temple. Neither Ahaz, nor the priests, nor the Levites frequented the holy place.

Then came a change. The burnt offering began after sixteen years of discontinuance, and the song of the Lord broke into utterance once again. Hezekiah became king, and "in the first month of his reign he opened the doors of the house of the Lord, and repaired them. And he brought in the priests and the Levites, and gathered them together into the east street, and said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the Lord God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place" (vss. 3-5).

"Carry forth the filthiness"—that is what must first be done. It is the call of the Apostle Paul: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (II Cor. 7:1). I have yet to learn what the apostle quite meant by the distinction between filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. Away back in the inner shrine of our spirit there must be filthiness.

The priests and the Levites gathered at Hezekiah's call. They "went into the inner part of the house of the Lord . . . and brought out all the uncleanness that they found" (vs. 16).

What followed? They made a sin offering; and so sin was put away (vs. 24).

Our Churches

Let us apply these truths first to our churches.

You are eagerly desirous of a revival of undefiled religion, that your hearts and homes should be full of praise to God. I call on the elders and deacons and leaders in our churches to come into the inner courts that they may be thoroughly cleansed from the filthiness that has accumulated there. Nobody brought it into the temple—it just accumulated. And the dust and filthiness of the world has accumulated in our souls, and you and I must deal with it.

Some years ago I met a gray-haired minister who told me the following story from his own life. Said he:

"I was brought up under Finney, and after my seminary course was sent to carry on a decayed work in a distant country district. There had been no revival, no stirring up of the Holy Ghost in those parts for years. I gathered some godly people in the vestry every Friday night to pray for a revival. We kept this up for fifteen months, but the heavens were as brass above us.

"When fall came on, I set apart a day for united prayer. My heart rejoiced as I saw the farmers driving in with their families, un-

til the schoolhouse behind the chapel was filled."

"I explained that we had gathered to pray for a revival. After the opening hymns and prayers the meeting was thrown open.

"The silence of death settled upon the audience. Everyone waited.

"Presently a leading old elder rose in a front seat, and said: 'Pastor, I don't think there is going to be a revival of the Holy Ghost here so long as Brother Jones and I don't speak to each other.'

"He left his pew, walked down the aisle and found Brother Jones, and said: 'Brother Jones, you and I have not spoken for five years. Let's bury the hatchet. Here's my hand!'

"The old man returned to his pew, and sat down. A sob broke from the audience, and then there was silence again.

"Soon another elder rose, and said: 'Pastor, I think there will be no revival here while I say fair things to your face and mean things behind your back. I want you to forgive me.'

"We shook hands, and the audience relapsed into stillness again."

The minister told me that he then witnessed the strangest scene of his life. For ten minutes men and women crept noiselessly about the house, squaring old scores. And God began to visit them.

The operatives in a factory nearby heard what was going on in the schoolhouse, and at the lunch hour they came over in such numbers that they were diverted into the church. The pastor preached to them the simple gospel, and within five minutes four of the ringleaders in sin in that community were crying to God for mercy. A revival broke out that swept to and fro over the district for three years.

I told this story at Wandsworth, England, once. A few weeks later, when addressing a gathering of ministers in London, I told it again, and a brother minister rose and said that after I had preached at Wandsworth, as he was going out, a man who owed him twenty-five dollars took his hand, and said: "Forgive my delay in settling that debt. You shall have the money tomorrow."

We must get back to first principles. We are right with God in the exact proportion that we are right with the men and women around us. Let us test ourselves, not by what we are on Sundays at church, but by what we are to the man whom we like least. That is the true gauge.

Is there any unkind, jealous feeling between pastor and pastor? Any irritation or fretting because of another's success?

Are you Christian people prepared to square up old scores? To give up things in business that you know are not perfectly consistent with Christ's commands?

If so, shake hands; write that letter; pay that money; have done with that source of irritation. Let the love of God be poured into your soul, and after that joy will come.

The Individual Heart

Let us now come to your own heart. Is any secret sin harbored there? Joy began in my life one solemn night when I knelt before Christ and had the holy light of His Spirit turned upon one thing in my heart that was filthy. It had accumulated there, and I hardly knew it. I had been living a very unsettled life for some time, when a young fellow came and spoke in my church, and led me to feel that he possessed a secret which I had not myself. The following morning at 7 o'clock I found my way to the house where he was staying. I knew the house very well, and went up to the room which he was occupying. I said: "You will excuse my coming, won't you? The fact is, I am very unhappy. I am a Christian minister, and people expect a great deal of me, but my heart is full of evil, and I cannot deal with it. Can you give me your secret?"

I could see by the candles that he had been up a long time; in fact, he told me he had been up since 4 o'clock. I asked him what he had been doing, and he said that the Lord had said, "If ye love

Me, keep My commandments"; and, said he: "I was just going over the commandments to see if I have kept them."

I told him I wanted to learn his secret, and he said: "There is nothing I have which you may not have."

"But how may I get right? I am a Christian, but how may I get entirely right?"

"Have you ever given yourself entirely to Christ?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied, "in a general way I have."

"If you have not done so entirely, go alone and settle it."

That night I knelt by my bed, with the door of my room locked, and resolved that I would not sleep until I had settled the matter and surrendered everything to Jesus. It seemed as though Jesus was by my side, and as if I took from my pocket a large bunch of keys which I generally carry when I am at home. I took from that bunch one tiny key, which I kept, and then held to Jesus the bunch with the one missing, and said to Him: "Here are the keys of my life."

He looked at me sadly, and asked: "Are all there?"

"All but one tiny one, to a small cupboard. It is so small that it cannot amount to anything."

He replied, "Child, if you cannot trust Me with everything, you cannot trust Me with anything."

Satan whispered to me: "You cannot give up that thing. Besides, if you let Christ have His way, you don't know what He will ask of you next. Don't give it to Him!"

Then the thought came to me of my only child, what at that time was somewhat wayward. Supposing she were to come to me and say: "Father, I give my whole life up to you; you may choose anything you want for me." I knew I would not call her mother and say: "Now is our chance. What can we do to make her life miserable and unhappy?" I would say: "Wife, here is our chance. We will take away everything that hurts her, and we will make her life one long summer day."

Christ would not be harder on me than I on my child, and at last I said: "Lord, I cannot give the key, but I am willing to have you come and take it."

It was as I expected, I seemed to hold out my hand, and He came and opened the fingers and took the key from me. Then He went straight to that cupboard, unlocked and opened it, and saw there a thing that was terrible and hideous. He said: "This must go out. You must never go this way again."

And the moment He took the thing from me, He took the desire for it out of my soul, and I began to hate it. Then I yielded myself absolutely to Him, and said: "From this night I want Thee to do as Thou wilt with my life."

The next morning I awakened expecting a sort of hallelujah feeling, but I was as calm and quiet as I am now. I only had a delightful sense that I did belong to Jesus Christ, and a hundred times that day I said to myself: "I am His! I am absolutely His!"

(Continued on page 6)

"Joy to the World The Lord Is Come"



"That your Joy might be full." John 15:11

How far will your joy extend this Christmas? Will it be limited to the four walls of your own home, or will you—as commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ—spread that joy "unto the uttermost parts of the world?"

You as a born-again Christian have now the opportunity to extend through the Scott Mission the Gospel joy to people in Poland, Israel, Hungary and other parts of Europe. Many requests are coming to us from Jews and Christians, pleading for urgent help. Here is a letter from a Hebrew Christian in Upper Silesia. "Dear Brother Zeidman,—You are the only person I know in America and the only one I can turn to for help. My only sister has turned against me because I am a Christian and married to a Gentile Christian. As the dreadful Polish winter is approaching we need to prepare not only food but fuel and clothing for the wife and children. Anything you can send us will be greatly appreciated. Yours in Christ, S. K."

Scores of men, women and children at home and abroad—chiefly in Poland, Hungary and Israel—depend on our good will and Christian charity. They are looking toward us as the ultimate and sure source of help. Let us not disappoint them but extend to them the Joy of the Lord which is our strength.

Should you desire to share in this worth-while Christian Testimony please make cheques payable to "The Scott Mission Inc." Cash contributions should be sent by registered mail. Thank you and may God bless you.

A Joyous Advent Season and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

THE SCOTT MISSION, INC.
Rev. M. Zeidman, Director,
502 Spadina Avenue,
Toronto 4, Canada.

Attention,

Puzzle

Fans . . .

Since the post office is so swamped, and bulk mailings will be delayed, your puzzle books will be late in reaching you during the Christmas season. So please be patient. They will reach you soon after the first of the year. Writing us about them causes extra work and, of course, extra money. We thank you for your patience.

Happy holiday season to all puzzle fans! And God bless and be near you!

The Song of the Lord Began

(Continued from page 5)

Have you some hidden cupboard in your soul in which you are harboring things whose miasma is killing your joy? Face your true condition. Too often we are like those who fear their lungs are diseased, and who dread examination by the stethoscope and surgeon lest he should reveal the true condition. We can make no headway until we are clean. Are you sure there is nothing in your heart you would not like Christ to deal with? Before you can have God's best, you must let Him search your soul and show what the unclean thing is which entered years ago and has choked your spiritual vitality ever since.

The Song Began

Now notice what happened next. Hezekiah had the altar ready. On one side were the

priests with the whole burnt offering, which signified Christ's entire consecration to God in His death, and also the entire consecration of believers to Christ in life. On the other side was the Levite choir in white vesture, and other Levites with cymbals and psalteries and harps. At a given signal the burnt offering was laid on the altar. I know not whether God sent fire from Heaven, or the wood was ignited with sacred fire that had somehow been kept burning all those years. But as the fire began the sweet voices of the choristers burst forth in song, and the music of the instruments was heard again.

The very heavens must have stood still to listen. Angels must have come in troops to hear the music in that familiar place after sixteen years of silence.

I found myself a few months ago in a bachelor's house. Bachelors are often taciturn, gloomy, and wrapped up in themselves; but this one lived in a beautiful house, and was one of the brightest men I ever met.

When supper was finished, I said: "You seem very happy?"

"Yes," he replied, "I'll tell you my story. Years ago I was making money, and chose this solitary life so as to be free from the anxieties of wife and children. But though I had all that the world could give, I was not happy."

"Then my brother died. He had no genius for business, and was always poor. He left a large family of children. I tried to provide for them, but finally had to import them all into this house. I thought the peace of my life had then gone out."

"For the first week it was agony to see those children run all over the house. But then they got hold of me, and I began to like them. I sent them to school, and have been both father and mother to them. Two of them are now married. I don't believe there is a happier man on God's earth than myself."

When the burnt offering began,

the song began. A self-centered life is a miserable life. When that man began to sacrifice himself, happiness came into his life.

And if to live for another is sweet, if it is lovely for a woman to live for a paralyzed husband, and if there is a song forever on her lips because she is all in all to him, what must it be when you are all in all for Jesus? Wherefore I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice—not a dead, but a living sacrifice—holy, acceptable unto God; and be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may know what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

How I fought God's will! I thought it was hard, inexorable, terrible; but when a man presents himself to it, he finds it good, acceptable and perfect. The thing you hate becomes your joy. As you look into Christ's face and say, "Rabboni—Master," easter joy springs in your soul.

God help you to clear away all the filthiness, and yield yourself to Him. Whether you can sing or not with the voice, the song of the Lord will begin in your soul!

—The END—

"Sword Wit Sharpener"

Paul's Letter to Philemon

CLEWS ACROSS

- 1 "We have great joy and consolation in thy . . ."
- 5 "Paul, a . . . of Jesus Christ"
- 12 "If he hath . . . thee"
- 14 Organ of smell
- 15 Second tone of the scale
- 16 Therefore
- 17 Remove, — 1 —
- 18 Established Church (abbr.)
- 19 Ethiopia (abbr.)
- 21 "Yet for love's . . . I rather beseech thee."
- 23 "But now profitable to . . . and to me"
- 25 "Knowing that thou wilt also do more than I . . ."
- 28 Inner Guard (abbr.)
- 29 Average (abbr.)
- 30 "Unto Philemon . . . dearly beloved"
- 31 "How thou owest unto . . . even thine own self"
- 32 Same as 15 across
- 33 "That thy benefit should not . . . as it were of necessity"
- 34 Capital of Upper Egypt (Jer. 46)
- 36 "Whom I have begotten in my . . ."
- 39 Being
- 41 "Let . . . have joy of thee in the Lord."
- 42 "Not . . . as a servant, but above a servant"
- 43 "I Paul have written . . . with mine own hand."
- 45 Library of Congress (abbr.)
- 47 "Which in time . . . was to thee unprofitable"
- 50 "But without thy mind would I . . . nothing"
- 51 Part of the verb "to be"
- 52 Exclamation
- 54 "That in thy . . . he might have ministered unto me"
- 56 "But how much . . . unto thee"
- 58 Ancestor of Jesus (Luke 3)

- 59 "Whom I have . . . again"
- 60 "If thou count me therefore a . . . , receive him."

CLEWS DOWN

- 2 "Or . . . thee ought"
- 3 Verb reflexive (abbr.)
- 4 Goddess of dawn (Gr. myth.)
- 5 Past Grand (abbr.)
- 6 Scarlet
- 7 Fresh-water fish, — e
- 8 "I beseech thee for my son . . ."
- 9 Same as 34 across
- 10 A well in the valley of Gezar (Gen. 26)
- 11 "Thou therefore . . . him."
- 13 Same as 9 down
- 15 "Whom I would have . . . with me"
- 20 "—ing of thy love and faith"
- 22 "Being such an one as Paul the . . . (d)"
- 24 "That thou shouldst receive him for . . ."
- 25 Same as 16 across
- 26 Astronomical unit (abbr.)
- 27 Year (abbr.)
- 33 "A . . . beloved, specially to me"
- 35 "Put that . . . mine account."
- 36 "Though I might be much . . . in Christ to enjoin thee"
- 37 No mark (abbr.)
- 38 "For perhaps he therefore — (ed) for a season"
- 40 Staten Island (abbr.)
- 42 Nova Scotia (abbr.)
- 44 "I trust . . . through your prayers I shall be given unto you."
- 46 State of insensibility
- 48 Last word of a prayer
- 49 Dined
- 53 Capital of Moab (Num. 21)
- 54 Statistical Society (abbr.)
- 55 Half an em
- 57 Word marking an alternative

Free!

with a correct entry for
Puzzle Number 51Church Members
Who Make God
Sick

By Dr. John R. Rice



If the message of this small booklet were to be read, believed and then enacted by every member of any church in the world, that church would experience another mighty Pentecost! Here, with holy boldness, with moving emotion, with characteristic John R. Rice preaching charm, the wicked indifference and sinful self-satisfaction of the twentieth century church member is exposed as the hideous, nauseating abomination it really is in the sight of our holy God. This is the type of message to be read on your knees in your secret closet, then shouted from the housetop to all who will listen.

Frankly, it would take a heart of stone and a dead soul to read this burning booklet unmoved and unresponsive. You will want it for your "circulating" library.

THE RULES

1. Fill in the empty blanks according to the clues given. Answers must be complete and correct.
2. PRINT (not write) your name and address in the blank below the puzzle. (Please include country in foreign addresses.) This coupon will serve as your address label for the envelope containing your prize. Mail to: PUZZLE EDITOR, THE SWORD OF THE LORD, Wheaton, Illinois. If you do not wish to cut up your copy of the paper, you may print (not more than three inches wide) on a separate sheet of paper your name and address, and the answers according to the clue numbers given. Entries will not be returned.
3. In order for you to receive the book, *Church Members Who Make God Sick*, your entry must be postmarked by midnight, December 29, 1958. If your paper arrives after the deadline date, please place the date of arrival on the entry. The answer to Puzzle Number 51 will appear in the January 9 issue of THE SWORD OF THE LORD.
4. Each person having a correct

Angel Said, "Merry Christmas . . .!"

(Continued from page 1)

hem. So they went outside the city toward the hamlet of Bethlehem. "And, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy" (Matt. 2:9, 10). It was "Merry Christmas" to the wise men.

In view of the glorious birth of the Saviour, I beg you to rejoice! Let not the words, the phrases, the wishes, be empty or formal. Let the words come from glad and grateful hearts, when we say to loved ones and friends, "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

I will not tell any lies about Christmas. I will not deceive little children about a potbellied Santa Claus from the North Pole who drives reindeer and slides down chimneys. I will not revel in drunkenness and lewdness. I will not look upon Christmas as a time of big business. But, God helping me, I will rejoice in the dear Lord Jesus, whose birthday I choose to remember at Christmastime. Praise God, I will rejoice!

I remember Camp MacArthur near Waco, Texas, in November, 1918. The weather was uncomfortable. The mud was deep. Camp life was dreary. Citizensoldiers snatched out of homes and business we were, postponing education and marriage and professions to serve our country. The bloody war that involved half the world held us in chains of circumstances, and headed us toward the bloody trenches of France.

Then came Armistice Day!

entry will receive a coupon along with the weekly prize. *Save these coupons!* They are important! At the end of the year those who have fifty coupons will receive a Scofield Bible. Those who have as many as thirty coupons will receive a World Bible. Please remember that the coupons which you have are the only record of your correct entries. It will be your responsibility to keep the coupons. In addition, note that coupons may not be exchanged with one another. The winning of a Bible is on an individual and not a group basis. Please limit all correspondence to only necessary items, and always include your complete address.

Answer to Puzzle No. 48

P	H	I	L	I	P	E	S	A	I	A	S
R	E	A	D	E	T	H	I	O	P	I	A
E	A	N	O	S	T	D	W				
A	R	O	S	E		O	T				
C	T	A				W	O	R	S	H	I
H	A	F	R			L	E	M	O	N	
E	C	I				S	O	U	T	H	
D	O	W	N			O	N			O	
M	A	N				G	R	E	A	T	A
R	E	T	R			S	H	I	P		
A	E	H	I			H	S	H	E	E	P
S	C	R	I	P	T	U	R	E	S	S	L
H	E	M	E			B	E	L	I	E	V

First there was a false report, and then a true one. The Germans had surrendered! World War I was over! Now we would soon go home, back to school and farm and city, back to wedding bells and careers and jobs.

I have never seen such a time of pandemonium and praise. Guns firing! Tubs and dish pans skidding, banging, tied behind cars! Anvils ringing, galvanized iron tanks pounding, soldiers yelling, singing!

It was good news to me. In a few weeks I was out of the army and had entered the university to finish my education. But that was no glad news such as the angel gave in Judaea that night when the glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds and they heard the glad tidings of great joy for all people. A Saviour was born!

I. What Were the Glad Tidings of Great Joy?

I do not wonder that God sent angels again and again to announce and rejoice and convince many people concerning the birth of His Son, our Saviour. How prodigal God was in showing these heavenly beings! An angel appeared to Zacharias. One appeared to Joseph in a dream. An angel appeared to Mary. First a spokesman angel and then a multitude of the heavenly host appeared to the shepherds in the field! It seemed that all the heavenly hosts somehow had to get in on the glad announcement.

God had created a star, a planet, a comet, a heavenly body, just to mark the birth of the Saviour and call it to the attention of the wise men of the East, who doubtless had long been looking for the Saviour, counting the sixty-nine weeks of years after the command to build and restore Jerusalem (Dan. 9:25) until Messiah, the Prince, should be born. And that star appeared again over the place in Bethlehem where the child lay!

When I was a boy in Texas, we had firecrackers and Roman candles and rockets at Christmas time. Yankees laughed at us: didn't we know that fireworks were for the Fourth of July? But I have always felt that the merry-making, the spectacular celebration of rockets going up and across the sky like a falling star, and the rhythmic flaming shots of the Roman candles were not too bright, nor the firecrackers too loud for the gladness that should be in our hearts when we think of the birth of the Lord Jesus! Firecrackers are dangerous, injurious, when carelessly used, and I am glad they are forbidden for casual use in most cities, but the celebration was not too happy for such glad tidings as we remember at Christmastime.

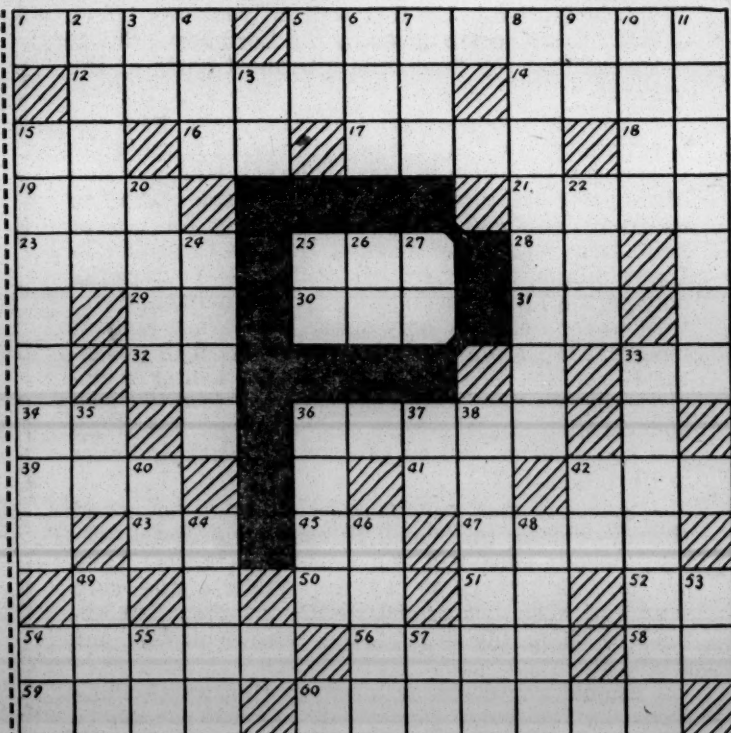
1. A Saviour Is Come for Us
Doomed Sinners!

And what were these glad tidings? They were simply this: "Un-

(Continued on page 7)

Deadline: December 29, 1958

PUZZLE NO. 51



Mail to Puzzle Editor, Sword of the Lord, Wheaton, Illinois

PRINT CLEARLY

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

(Out along dotted lines)

Angel Said, "Merry Christmas...!"

(Continued from page 6)

to you is born this day . . . a Saviour!"

The best thing that God could ever do for sinful men is to give them a Saviour. Do you want a job or education or income or security or happy marriage or success or public office or fame? Besides the glad and precious boon of a Saviour for sinners, these are nothing! Paul rightly said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners . . ." (I Tim. 1:15).

Will you notice that Jesus came not as a teacher, though He spake as never man spake? Jesus came not merely nor primarily as an example, though He was so sinless and blameless and perfect that every sinless angel would have delighted to be so pure and good; yet Jesus came, not simply to show us how to do right, but to forgive our sins and save our souls! Jesus is not "a religious leader"; He is a Saviour. Jesus is not "the founder of one of the world's great religions"; He is Himself a God we worship, the Creator who made us, a God who became flesh and dwelt among us and died for our sins, and who now, as we sinners repent, takes us to His heart and eventually to His everlasting Home! Jesus is a Saviour.

Oh, what pity to miss this great gift at Christmastime, and miss Jesus as a Saviour. Many men have taken holy orders, have taken vows of poverty and chastity, and have been honored as religious men, who never knew Christ as Saviour! Men have cast out devils, have preached sermons, have built cathedrals, have sung with great choirs, have been officers of churches, who never knew the glad Christmas joy of Jesus as a personal Saviour!

I do not wonder that when the disciples came back from a tour and hastened to tell Jesus that devils were subject to them, Jesus answered, "Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20). Because Jesus came to be a Saviour, I have my name written in Heaven. And here is the greatest of all blessings, the sweetest cause for rejoicing. Jesus came to save sinners. I have a Saviour!

2. It Is the Prophesied Christ of the Old Testament Who Is Come

And the Saviour, we are told, "is Christ the Lord." That is, He is the Christ so long foretold in the Old Testament.

I note three names for Jesus in Psalm 2. He is "his anointed." He is "the Lord." He is "the Son," and "My Son." And it is this anointed (the Christ), this Son of God, this Lord who now is born of a virgin and laid in a manger in Bethlehem!

This is the "seed of the woman" promised to Eve, who shall bruise the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15). He is the "Prophet . . . like unto me" that Moses spoke of (Deut. 18:15). He is the suffering servant pictured in Isaiah, chapters 50 to 53. He is the Crucified One whose torture of soul is uncovered in Psalm 22. This baby born in Bethlehem is the promised seed of Abraham, the promised seed of David. All the prophetic passover lambs are fulfilled in this Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. All the priests of the Old Testament pointed to this great High Priest, the only mediator between God and man! The Creator, Jehovah, has taken on Himself the man, has become obedient unto death to save sinners!

Sing it out, angels! Glad tidings for all people! Merry Christmas for everybody, for the Christ of God is come. The long-awaited Saviour is born.

3. Merry Christmas for Everybody

They are "Good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people" that the angel brought that night! Those shepherds, a few of them gathered in the fields watching their flocks, did they think that the message was for them alone? Oh, no, but "when they had seen it, they made known abroad the

saying which was told them concerning the child" (Luke 2:17). These were glad tidings for all peoples.

Not only for Jews, but for Gentiles in heathen darkness, speaking strange languages, Gentiles shut out from the Temple, uncircumcised, men whose fathers had been turned to reprobate minds so that they might go into heathen doctrine and practice; the glad tidings are for them too. It was for my ancestors when they were heathen Celts in the forests of Germany, or in the Island of Britain. It was for "every nation under Heaven" whose representatives later were in Jerusalem at Pentecost.

The birth of the Saviour was not for that age alone, but for all the ages of the future. Thank God, the promises were to them and their children "and to all that are afar off." And the disciples are commanded to preach the Gospel to every creature, and Jesus promised them, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." So the good news of Christmas is for me and for you, and all our generation.

More than that, the good news about Jesus, a Saviour born, a way open to forgiveness, a way to peace with God and a home in

Heaven and everlasting righteousness and blessedness—those glad tidings of a Saviour were offered to all those of the past as well. For before the angel shouted that glad message in the calm Judean night, with the glory of the Lord shining round about, Abraham heard it on the plains of Mamre and believed the Lord and it was counted to him for righteousness! (Gen. 15:6, Rom. 4:3). Before that, even before the flood, Enoch knew it, and walked with God, by faith in the coming Saviour. And Enoch knew of Christ's coming and even of His second coming, as we are told in Jude 14.

Many a Gentile had heard it too. Rahab the harlot in Jericho somehow heard the message long before and hung a scarlet cord out of the window, picturing the refuge and salvation from the ruin that comes by sin.

The queen of Sheba heard it when she met Solomon, and found that the half had never been told her before. Naaman, the Syrian captain who was a leper, heard those glad tidings when he came to Elijah and dipped seven times in the Jordan and went back to Syria cleansed of leprosy and having forgiveness from the true God. Ruth the Moabitess heard it when she said to Naomi, "Thy people shall be my people and thy God my God," and she came to trust under the wings of the "Lord God of Israel" (Ruth 2:12).

Oh, when the angel shouted aloud the glad tidings to everybody, he said only what God had been saying before. He said it in the heart of Simeon, who waited to die until after he had held the baby Jesus in his arms! Already Anna the prophetess had heard the glad tidings of great joy, and came into the Temple and blessed God over the baby Jesus. Oh, it is "Merry Christmas for everybody." It is "glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people."

I know not by what methods rare,
But this I know, God answers prayer.
I know not when He sends the word
That tells us fervent prayer is heard.
I know it cometh soon or late:
Therefore we need to pray and wait.
I know not if the blessing sought
Will come in just the guise I thought.
I leave my prayers with Him alone
Whose will is wiser than my own.

—Eliza M. Hickok.

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Oh, this good news of the birth of the Saviour is so great that God seems to make devils and sinners help to celebrate it, just as do angels and the people of God!

So when I hear some loud-speakers on the street, Christmas carols, the sound of "Silent Night, Holy Night" or "Hark, the Herald

tian and infidel alike, whether consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, do homage to the birth of Christ! Oh, the angel was right when he said, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." The angel said, "Merry Christmas for everybody!"

I grew up in the semiarid ranch country in West Texas. Two or three hundred people lived in the little cow town near where I lived. Each Christmas there would be a big community Christmas tree. One year it would be in the Baptist Church and the next year in the Methodist Church. And I remember that there were no evergreen trees of any kind nearby. The leaves were gone from the mesquite brush twisted everywhere on the prairies. Down on the creeks the cottonwood and hackberry and elm trees had no leaves. So a committee of men took a farm wagon and team of horses and drove forty miles to find a wild cedar for the Christmas tree. It took a long hard day's drive to get there. They camped out, and the next morning they found a tree, cut it, and loaded it. It was far into the night on the second day when they returned. But what were two days and two nights of labor to get a green Christmas tree?

I remember the days of deepest poverty. My father had been ill. Business had been bad. He told us sorrowfully that there could be no Christmas presents that Christmas.

Not meaning to embarrass our father, thoughtless but expectant, we children hung our stockings on Christmas Eve just as we had done at other Christmases. We could not believe there would be no gifts for Christmas. So after we were in bed, my father woke up the storekeeper, made arrangements for credit, and bought some simple Christmas gifts and oranges and candy, and the next morning we had each one his orange, some hard candy, and a little gift.

Oh, this good news of the birth of the Saviour is so great that God seems to make devils and sinners help to celebrate it, just as do angels and the people of God!

So when I hear some loud-speakers on the street, Christmas carols, the sound of "Silent Night, Holy Night" or "Hark, the Herald

Angels Sing" or "O Little Town of Bethlehem" or "The First Noel," I will rejoice. One who broadcasts the Christmas music may be an enemy of Christ, or may have only commercial aims, but I know that it is a projection of the announcement of the angel of glad tidings of great joy for all people! The angel really meant that holy night, when he spoke to the shepherds, "Merry Christmas for everybody!"

II. Christmas Is a Time for Gifts

"God so loved the world that He gave . . ." gave the greatest gift that even God Almighty could give. He gave His Son, He gave Himself, He gave everlasting life, He gave eternity, to poor condemned sinners! So when the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write about Christian giving in II Corinthians 9, the blessed Holy Spirit caused his mind to leap at once to the greatest gift ever given, and he ended that chapter, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (II Cor. 9:15). Oh, how could anybody think about the birth of Christ without remembering it is a time for gifts!

I read the other day an elaborate article reasoning that, since at Christmas we celebrate the birthday of Christ, all gifts should be for the Lord Jesus Christ alone at that time.

Now, my own heart answers back that we ought to give to the Lord Jesus. Not only some well-wrapped gifts in gaily colored paper, not even primarily that, but we should give Him our possessions, our lives, our wills, our futures, all we have and all we are. I am not against giving to the Lord Jesus, though I solemnly warn every reader that no little gift of money could satisfy the righteous demands of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I feel that oftentimes Christians should make some special love gift to the Lord to help get out the Gospel at Christmastime. Oh, certainly we should remember that Christ Himself is first at Christmas.

1. Joseph and Mary Doubtless Shared Gifts to Baby Jesus

But I do not feel that we dishonor God by giving gifts to others at Christmastime.

The article I mentioned reminded us of the gifts of the wise men, who opened their treasures and presented gifts to the Lord Jesus, gold and frankincense and myrrh (Matt. 2:11). And that writer, rather thoughtlessly it seemed to me, said that the gifts were for the Lord Jesus Christ alone and hence we ought to give gifts to Jesus Christ alone at Christmas.

But what about Joseph and Mary? I have no doubt that the gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh, having now symbolized that Jesus deserved tribute as a king, and prayer and praise as deity, and bitter herbs as a suffering Saviour, a passover lamb, then were used for the expense of the journey and stay in Egypt as they fled from Herod. Surely the gold and frankincense and myrrh were given to the Lord Jesus, but they were used also for Mary and Joseph as well as for the baby Jesus. How can we have a Christmas that honors the Lord Jesus and leaves out all the people the Lord Jesus loves so well? Are not these glad tidings of the angels "Good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people?"

I am reminded by the Scriptures, "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (I John 4:20).

2. Nehemiah Taught Israel to Celebrate a Day "Holy unto God" by Feasting and Gifts to Others

It seems to me that the implications of many Scriptures is that a time of spiritual blessing ought to be a time of giving gifts to others.

When a remnant of Israel went back to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem under Nehemiah, the law was read and explained and the people wept because they became conscious of their failures and sins and of national punishment. But Nehemiah told them, "This day is holy unto the Lord your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law. Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the

fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for this day is holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

If then on a day that we regard as holy to the Lord, we "eat the fat, and drink the sweet," if we have big dinners with turkey and dressing and cranberry sauce and mince pies and fruit cake, we may and we should thereby glorify God and rejoice. If we at Christmastime "send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared," that is a proper way of remembering that "this day is holy unto our Lord." And if our hearts are merry and we send glad greetings, we can properly thus honor the Lord who commanded, "Neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the Lord is your strength."

3. Jews Delivered From Destruction Established the Feast of Purim With Feasting, Sending Portions, and With Gifts to the Poor

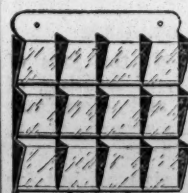
We remember the grand deliverance that God wrought for the Jews, in the days of Esther, when they were captives away from home. After fasting and prayer, Esther interceded with the king and the Jews were saved from the utter destruction which the enemies of God and wicked Haman had planned. The Jews defended themselves and were delivered and we are told how they celebrated this holy day:

"On the thirteenth day of the month Adar; and on the fourteenth day of the same rested they, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. But the Jews that were at Shushan assembled together on the thirteenth day thereof, and on the fourteenth day thereof; and on the fifteenth day of the same they rested, and made it a day of feasting and gladness. Therefore the Jews of the villages, that dwelt in the unwalled towns, made the fourteenth day of the month Adar a day of gladness and feasting, and a good day, and of sending portions one to another" (Esther 9:17-19).

So Mordecai taught all the Jews in the world "both nigh and far" to set aside the Feast of Purim, "To establish this among them, that they should keep the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, yearly, As the days wherein the Jews rested from their enemies, and the month which was turned unto them from sorrow to joy, and from mourning into a good day: that they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and gifts to the poor" (Esther 9:21, 22).

Did it dishonor the Lord when in remembrance of all His blessings the Jews set aside "a day of feasting and gladness," and rested therein? And when they made it "a good day, and of sending portions one to another," did that dishonor God? And again,

(Continued on page 8)



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Angel Said, "Merry Christmas...!"

(Continued from page 7)

when the Jews made it a national holiday, that on the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month Adar, "they should make them days of feasting and joy, and of sending portions one to another, and of gifts to the poor"? Thus they honored God. Thus they made it a holy day.

It is not wrong to 'send portions one to another' at Christmas. It does not dishonor the dear Lord Jesus, God's own unspeakable gift to us, if we send gifts to the poor, and if we have feasting and rejoicing at the Christmastime.

I remember the gifts of Solomon and the queen of Sheba to each other. And they seemed to have been somehow the expression of great spiritual blessing. I remember the love gifts of the little church at Philippi sent to Paul in prison. And when they sent gifts to Paul, they honored the dear Lord Jesus.

Oh, Christmastime is a time for the giving of gifts, a time for rejoicing. And whatever else you do, this Christmastime do not lose sight of the spiritual joy, the sharing with others, the gratitude for loved ones, to glorify God with glad hearts, which properly cele-

to let his light shine, it ought to be at Christmas. One can talk about the Lord Jesus at Christmas easier than at other times. Even the hardened sinner has somehow a soft spot toward Christ at Christmas. So I beg Christians that they give subscriptions to Christian magazines like THE SWORD OF THE LORD, or that they give the best Christian books, or that they give a Scofield Reference Bible, or in some other way especially honor the dear Lord Jesus in their giving and in their greetings.

The other day the family gathered for Thanksgiving at our house. It was a big crowd, as always, with most of the children and grandchildren present. Mrs. Rice had gotten up at five in the morning to put on the big sixteen-pound turkey to cook and it was cooked to perfection. And the southern cornbread dressing with nuts was good, and the gibleb gravy, and the cranberry sauce, and the pumpkin pie. And after the dinner there were games and singing and then the buffet supper. But we simply could not break up the happy gathering of loved ones without time for testimony and praises. So around the

ings for which we ever have reason to thank God, there is no blessing like that which came to us when God gave His Son! Like Paul, the inspired apostle, we must say, "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."

No testimony a Christian can give would be better than the joy of salvation, the constant overflowing of praise for such a Saviour.

Hallelujah what a Saviour!

Who can take a poor lost sinner,
Lift him from the miry clay

And set him free:

I will ever tell the story,
Shouting glory, glory, glory,
Hallelujah! Jesus
Ransomed me.

Let us make sure then that there is a holy joy in our Christmas carols, in our Christmas feasts, and that the gratitude and praises of our grateful hearts have free expression this Christmastime!

1. Dear Sinner, Take Jesus, God's Christmas Gift to You!

Some man, some woman, youth, or child reads this who is unsaved. Oh, have you received God's "unspeakable gift"? We are told that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," but many have foolishly and wickedly neglected or rejected the gift. Have you received God's sweet gift of Jesus Christ in your heart? Have you received the forgiveness of sins and eternal life and the assurance of a home in Heaven?

Every Christmas carol is a mockery to one who does not know the Saviour. All the Christmas feasts are not holy feasts, but sensual and carnal without Christ in the heart. What hypocrisy to celebrate Christmas while in their wicked hearts men and women turn down the Lord of Glory, that Saviour born of a virgin and announced to the world by the angel!

Oh, I want to remind you that salvation is not something you buy. It is a gift of God. Salvation is not something earned by your merit, your character, your good deeds, or your religious rites. Salvation is something that God has given free in His Son. The moment you open your heart to the Lord Jesus and receive Him, trust Him, depend upon Him, surrender to Him, that moment you have the gift of eternal life, which was announced by the angel.

Oh, you can never know the "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people," unless you open your heart to receive Jesus.

There is no time like now. The best Christmas gift you could give your mother, your wife, your father, or your husband and children, is to trust the Lord Jesus and receive Him this Christmastime.

What a wonderful thing it would be if hereafter when you celebrate Christmas you could celebrate also the time when you first said yes to Jesus, and when He came in to dwell and be your own Saviour! How glad each Christmas hereafter would be if you could remember that it was at Christmastime that you opened your heart to Jesus and let Him in!

I beg every reader, do not make a mockery of Christmas. Do not have a Christmas without Christ. Whatever gifts may hang on a Christmas tree or fill a Christmas stocking, Christmas will be a barren thing and the fleeting pleasure will soon be gone and all its beauty will soon be ashes for you if you do not receive Christ and love and trust Him.

We have the plain statement of the Word of God. He loves you. Jesus died for you, and "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And then we are told in Acts 16: 31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved . . ." The moment you honestly turn to Christ, admitting your sin and depending on Him to forgive and save you, that moment you can receive this gift, God's unspeakable gift, of Christ and salvation through Christ.

2. God Who Gave His Son Will Give All Else! Receive Your Gifts!

And Christmastime is a good time for us to remember that the gift of Jesus Christ is a proof that God will give His own every good thing they seek. What a sweet and compelling argument

it is when God tells us, "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). God gave His Son. We celebrate that at Christmastime. Oh, but if God would give His dearly loved, the express image of His glory, then God would give Himself and everything in Heaven and earth, so great is His love!

Is there something that you need, something your heart cries for, something that you want? Then first submit it to God that you may want only something good for you, something that will help and not hinder, something that will bless and not burn. We are not always wise in what we wish, but the Spirit will help us to know and to pray in the will of God. And then, if it is something that will be good and not bad, something that will honor God and not dishonor Him and hurt, ask it freely. For God who gave up His Son for us all, "How shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

When you go to pray, remember it is a throne of grace to which we come. Christmas means that God gave. Thank God, He still gives! So when you pray, when there is a need, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16).

Do you notice how your heart somehow longs to give to those you love? Oh, already here at the Thanksgiving season I have been digging and planning and praying and scheming what I can give to make happy those I love. I picked out some friends to whom I give my newest book, and I have been writing words of love and greeting in those books already. I have carefully worded a Christmas letter to send greetings and love to many.

Naturally the tenderest part of my heart is stirred for my children. Oh, to make them happy!

And does God not want to make His children happy? We are told, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him" (Ps. 103:13). And Jesus said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" (Matt. 7: 11).

Oh, at Christmastime be bold in your praying. Good Christians, you have a Heavenly Father who loves you. The glad tidings of a Saviour given ought to remind everyone of us how God loves us. It ought to teach us to be bold in prayer. It ought to fill our mouths with praises. It ought to bring us to new dedication. And as we give ourselves, let us receive the gifts that God has for us.

Good News for Sinners!

Dear lost sinner who reads this, will you in this glad Christmas season turn your heart from sin, and open your heart to receive Jesus Christ, God's unspeakable gift? Will you now enter once and for all into the joy of Christmas, and into the permanent joy of sins forgiven and a home in Heaven and a new heart, by turning to Christ today?

Jesus died for you. Your sins are all paid for. And if you will honestly turn your heart from sin and depend upon Christ, He will save you now. He promised, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). He said, "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). The moment you turn to the Lord Jesus, the moment you receive Him and trust Him and depend upon Him, the moment you commit your soul into His keeping, that trusting moment you become a child of God. That moment your sins are blotted out and you are entered in the Lamb's Book of Life. Will you now, this moment, this second, say yes to Jesus Christ? Will you receive the grandest Christmas gift that anybody ever received by accepting Christ, who is offered as your Saviour?

If you will take Christ as Saviour here and now, I ask you to do three things. First, settle it in

your heart. Say yes to Jesus, an eternal yes, by giving yourself to Him and depending on Him to forgive you and to give you everlasting life as He promised to do. Say yes and trust Him.

Second, will you sign the following statement and then copy it in a letter and mail it to me at once? I will send you a letter of counsel and will rejoice with you.

And third, I beg you tell someone dear to you now today. Tell that the best you know you have trusted Jesus Christ to save you, and that you are writing to tell me that. Will you do it? Now here is the statement to sign and copy and mail when you have trusted Christ in your heart. I beg you, do it now, this moment!

Evangelist John R. Rice, Editor
THE SWORD OF THE LORD
Box 420, Wheaton, Illinois

Dear Brother Rice:

I realize I am a poor lost sinner. But, thank God, I believe that Jesus died for me, that Jesus is God's gift to poor lost sinners. And so in this Christmas season I now turn from my sins with honest repentance and depend upon Jesus to save me. I want to receive God's gift now. So I trust Him to come into my heart and forgive me and save me as He promised to do.

I will claim Him openly as my Saviour and will set out to live for Him by His help. Please pray for me and write me a letter of encouragement.

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That Night

*That night when in the Judean skies
The mystic star dispensed its light,
A blind man moved in his sleep—
And dreamed that he had sight.*

*That night when shepherds heard the song
Of hosts angelic choiring near,
A deaf man stirred in slumber's spell—
And dreamed that he could hear!*

*That night when in the cattle stall
Slept Child and mother cheek by jowl,
A crippled turned his twisted limbs—
And dreamed that he was whole.*

*That night when o'er the newborn Babe
The tender Mary rose to lean,
A loathsome leper smiled in sleep—
And dreamed that he was clean.*

*That night when to the mother's breast
The little King was held secure,
A harlot slept a happy sleep—
And dreamed that she was pure!*

*That night when in the manger lay
The Sanctified who came to save,
A man moved in the sleep of death—
And dreamed there was no grave.*

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

brate the "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." The good tidings that we hear from the voice of the announcing angel are not simply good tidings to Jesus Christ. They are good tidings for all people everywhere.

III. But Surely It Is a Time to Honor the Lord Jesus Christ at Christmastime

I believe that all the joys of family, of holiday, of feasting, of Christmas gifts and Christmas greetings, must be subordinate to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not only for Christmas, but for all the year, we are to remember the plain injunction of I Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." I do not think of Christmas as a time for license. In my boyhood some who were good Christians through the year were greatly tempted and broke over to attend the holiday dances, or, with the excuse for spiked eggnog, got drunk. So Christmas may be a time of temptation. Christians should beware that everything at Christmastime, just as all the rest of the year, should honor the dear Lord Jesus. Whether we eat or whether we drink or play or visit or give gifts or receive them, whether we eat a dry crust of bread or whether we feast at bountiful tables, we should glorify the dear Lord Jesus.

To whomever you may give Christmas gifts, give them in the name of Jesus! And give gifts that will honor His name and will bless people spiritually. Oh, if there is ever a time for every Christian

circle we went and each one told some of the reasons for which we could thank God. We rejoiced in Thanksgiving Day, but we particularly tried to praise the Lord Jesus and give Him honor.

And so at Christmastime, let us be sure we are good Christians, that our giving, our rejoicing, our feasting, our visiting all honors the Lord Jesus and remembers Him and glorifies His name. What a time for testimony! What a time for love for others that points people to the love of God!

And a word of warning: Let us beware of the heathenish practices of a heathen world! For Sunday School teachers to tell a lie about Santa Claus is an abomination. How much better to be telling the glad stories of the angels and the shepherds, and of the virgin birth of the Saviour in a stable, and of the wise men from the East who brought the gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh!

Do you think Christmas will be sweeter to children because of a fairy tale now which tomorrow proves to be a lie, of innocent gladness now which turns out to frustration and a knowledge tomorrow that they have been deceived and lied to? Oh, honor the Lord Jesus, and beware of the heathen ways about us at Christmastime!

What a scandal for people to celebrate the birth of Christ with cocktails! What a scandal to have a Christmas feast to remember the Lord Jesus, and serve wine!

IV. Be Glad: Receive Your Gifts From God!

Christians should be happy at Christmas. Oh, of all the bless-